

The Tory campaign is already showing the inevitable con...

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The Tory election campaign had a bad start.

Gaffe followed resignation followed gaffe. Rees-Mogg revealed his belief in his own superiority. Andrew Bridgen revealed his stupidity. Alana Cairns his lack of judgement, or worse, when it come to the seriousness of rape allegations. James Cleverly proved he was not, yet again. Conservative Central Office's howling mistake in issuing a hopelessly misedited video was even called out by Piers Morgan.

All that take some doing. But there is an easy explanation. The Conservative Party has shifted markedly to the right over the last few years. Those who understood anything (and I mean, anything at all because I do not want to overstate thing) concerning compromise, empathy, management and even politics, have been almost entirely purged from its ranks. And this at a time when there is general opinion that the quality of politicians has already been in decline.

The result is now all too obvious. The Tory leadership really is made up of people who you would not trust when it came to selling second hand cars. Worse, most could not manage the process of doing so. And many would alienate potential customers long before a deal was being considered.

Let me be clear that I expect gaffes from Labour in this election. The LibDems have already suffered their seemingly routine prime ministerial delusions. So I am not saying this is solely a Tory trait. But, I think it likely to be most especially a Tory trait. In a party where indiscipline is rife, politically maverick behaviour rampant and common sense decidedly rare, from the Leader onwards, the chance that the Tories can blow this is very large. Indeed, it may well be the biggest factor in the outcome.

For all governments elections are theirs to lose. That is true even when you are a minority already, albeit with a large opinion poll lead. Labour has to do extraordinarily well in this election. But the Tories only have to be themselves to lose it. They were up to the task of being themselves yesterday. And unless they're going to be as absent from much of the campaign as Johnson was from EU negotiations during July, August

and September, then the likelihood that they will continue to blunder is very high indeed. That's the inevitable consequence of sacking competence.